



News Release

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UDOH Launches Next Phase of the Highly Successful “I Did It!” Campaign

(Salt Lake City -UT) - After two incredibly successful series of commercials featuring Utahns who have kicked the tobacco habit, the Utah Department of Health's (UDOH) The Truth campaign today begins the next phase of its highly successful "I Did It!" advertising campaign.

The new commercials, scheduled to begin on Utah television and radio within the next week, feature more ex-smokers sharing insights into the process of quitting. The five ex-smokers tell their success stories in a very lively, honest, straightforward (and sometimes comedic) way. They describe how people who smoke feel when they light up, why they quit and why other smokers should follow suit.

Though the new commercials build upon the “I Did It!” theme and messaging developed in previous advertising, the ex-smokers’ “can-do” attitude and understanding of the thought processes involved in tobacco use come across more strongly and personally than ever before. To further illustrate the negative aspects of smoking, the featured ex-smokers relate their smoking experiences in terms of financial costs, health costs, second hand smoke, hygiene and so on.

“These ex-smokers are sending a message out to smokers that says, ‘Hey, we know what you're thinking. You are tired of smoking. Tired of wasting your money. Tired of the way you feel. We have been there. But hey, I Did It and so can you,’” said Heather Borski, UDOH Tobacco Prevention and Control Program manager.

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Borski said the new phase of the "I Did It!" commercials were developed following extensive research conducted with Utah smokers.

“We know from the interviews we've conducted and the personal stories that have been submitted that smokers want messages of help and hope – not guilt and shame,” Borski said. “They want support. They want to know that they are not alone.”

The tobacco industry spends \$90.8 million yearly in Utah (\$11.22 billion nationwide) marketing its products to children and adults. The UDOH counters tobacco industry advertising with its anti-tobacco media campaign. In Utah, the ratio of pro-tobacco media spending to anti-tobacco media spending is 10:1.

Well-designed media campaigns are a cost-effective means of impacting attitudes, social norms, and behaviors. These messages heighten public awareness about the health effects of tobacco products, encourage people never to start using the products, and motivate them to get help in quitting. The UDOH’s media efforts are critical to driving Utahns to services such as the Utah Tobacco Quit Line. Last year's advertising and community outreach campaign generated some 15,000 calls to the Quit Line.

Utahns who need help quitting tobacco may call the Utah Tobacco Quit Line at 1-888-567-TRUTH. The Quit Line offers live tobacco cessation counseling, as well as referrals to additional services, state-of-the-art cessation booklets and kits with quitting aids such as gum, straws, nail files and pens. The Quit Line operates Monday – Thursday from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. People can also visit Utah QuitNet at www.utahquitnet.com, which offers 24 hours of tobacco cessation help via the Internet.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public’s health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death; assuring access to affordable, quality health care; and promoting healthy lifestyles.